

Fall 2025

SOUTH DAKOTA SOYBEAN LEADER

A publication of the South Dakota Soybean Association

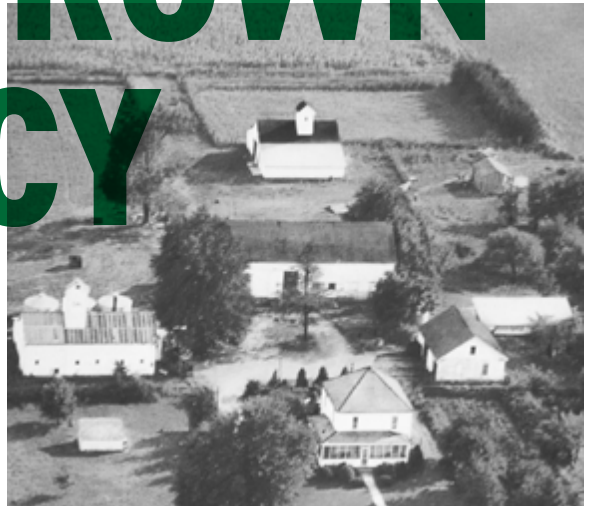
2025 Fall Check-In

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Where food begins: Landi Schweigert's day with Andrew Heine in Vermillion. Story on page 26.



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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

FROM FIELDS TO POLICY: SDSA PRESIDENT REFLECTS ON HARVEST AND ADVOCACY

By Kevin Deinert, President of the South Dakota Soybean Association

Stop and smell the roses! While I may prefer fresh cut alfalfa, I heard that smell triggers the strongest of memories. With the coming of fall, I could not agree more. The cutting of silage, the harvesting of grain, and even county and state fairs always evoke some of the strongest memories. The first whiff sends years of memories flooding through my head and smiles to my face. It is truly a magical time of year as we see our annual dream of harvest come to fruition and we relish the accomplishments of our hard work. My hat's off to all producers as we overcome the challenges this year has thrown at us.



KEVIN DEINERT
SDSA President

Turning our attention to the South Dakota Soybean Association, our directors have been working overtime to tackle all the challenges that have been thrown at us this year. The conversations have been tough, and the work even tougher, but we continue to press forward to shape policy locally and nationally to help benefit the South Dakota farmer. It is no secret that commodity prices are disappointing, and that is why our directors continue to advocate on your behalf to bring on progress. While we applaud the recent farm advancements in the Reconciliation Bill, we continue to press our elected officials to pass a Farm Bill that helps keep our farmers farming in trying times like these.

Again, looking at the national scene, we here at SDSA, in partnership with the American Soybean Association, work to push back on harmful policies and concerning language wherever they come from. Of concern was the recent language associated with the MAHA report. While we all can agree that we should strive for a healthier and dietarily safe nation, it should not come at the expense of inaccurate statements and unproven science. Thus, we have worked with many organizations to help encourage that any decisions made by the Department of Health and Human Services be based on proven and fact-based science.

Although this year feels like the opening line of Charles Dickens' book *A Tale of Two Cities*, I hope that you have so far weathered the best and worst that the weather has had to offer. With some parts of the state too dry and some too wet, South Dakota sometimes feels like the Tale of Two States. But no matter what happens, I hope that during the rush of the fall, you too stop and smell the harvest and create memories with those you love. To all of you who make South Dakota special, I pray that you are staying safe during this busy time of year. ■

God Bless!

Kevin Deinert

Kevin Deinert



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DAVID STRUCK, *Chairman of SDSRPC*

HARVEST HUSTLE: REMEMBERING THE SIMPLE STEPS THAT KEEP US SAFE

By David Struck, *Chairman of SDSRPC*

It appears the state as a whole is headed for a strong crop. Early signs suggest that a large portion of this year's soybeans will be going into storage, and I anticipate we'll see bins filling quickly across the countryside. The South Dakota Soybean Checkoff has been working closely with buyers, inviting them to our farms, and striving to ensure that when opportunities arise later in the season, producers will have viable and profitable marketing options.

While we look forward to the rewards of this harvest, I want to stress one important reminder: safety must remain our top priority on every farm. Harvest is a busy time, and in the rush to get things done, it can be easy to overlook simple precautions. Please take a moment to look up and watch for power lines when setting up augers, stay alert around running equipment, and never cut corners when it comes to safety protocols.

If you're hauling grain to the terminal, be especially mindful of the crews directing traffic at scales and dump pits. Watch for signals, follow their instructions, and please avoid using your phone while moving through these busy areas. At the end of each day, the goal is simple but vital: we all want to return home safely to our families.

For equipment operators, please make it a habit to shut down machinery before performing any maintenance or adjustments. If someone is assisting you, communicate clearly and confirm they are safely clear before restarting or moving any piece of

equipment. A moment of patience can prevent a lifetime of regret.

Looking ahead, I remain optimistic that new trade deals will be secured in the near future. Your Checkoff Board is working diligently to open doors to new markets, explore innovative uses for soybeans, and expand demand both domestically and abroad. Beyond the marketplace, we are also committed to strengthening connections with consumers by sharing the story of how farmers produce a food supply that is safe, nutritious, sustainable, and dependable. These efforts help ensure that soybean farm families remain competitive and that our products are valued both at home and around the world.

As we enter this critical season, I wish you and your family a safe and successful harvest. Please don't hesitate to reach out if the South Dakota Soybean Checkoff or our staff can support you in any way. If you have ideas for new uses, better practices, or opportunities to advance our industry, we welcome your input.

Thank you for your dedication to family and community. We'll talk again in the next edition of the *Soybean Leader*. ■

David Struck

David Struck
Chairman of SDSRPC

South Dakota Voices at the USB Meeting

South Dakota Soybean leaders recently joined fellow farmers and industry partners July 13th-17th at the United Soybean Board meeting in Norfolk, Virginia. The gathering offered valuable discussions on soybean research and promotion, as well as a memorable dinner aboard a retired battleship at the adjoining museum.



USB Directors Todd Hanten (Goodwin, SD), Dawn Scheier (Salem, SD), Tim Ostrem (Centerville, SD), and Mike McCranie (Claremont, SD) with SD Soybean Checkoff Director April Bowar (Faulkton, SD).

“Soy” Much Summer Fun!



The Stockyards Ag Experience launched its first-ever Summer Carnival with a perfect mix of family fun, community spirit, and ag education Friday, July 18th. South Dakota Soybean teamed up with First PREMIER

Bank to serve warm mini donuts, adding a sweet touch to the day. Families came out to play games, join activities, and learn how farming connects to everyday life.



Soy Solutions in Action

South Dakota Soybean teamed up with Cross Plains Solutions at the South Dakota State Fire School in Watertown in June to share about SoyFoam, an innovative soy-based fire-suppressing foam. A live demo drew plenty of interest, and several South Dakota fire departments received free SoyFoam to take home. It was a great opportunity to highlight how soy can make a difference in unexpected ways - even in fire safety.



Checkoff Champions Farmers at Credit Summit



The 2025 SDBA Agricultural Credit Conference brought together ag and finance leaders to tackle the big questions around lending and credit access. South Dakota Soybean Checkoff joined as an exhibitor, connecting with partners, sharing how the checkoff supports farmers, and keeping soybeans front and center in conversations about the future of South Dakota's ag economy.

5th Annual Midwest Ag Export Summit

August 13th, South Dakota Soybean board members joined ag leaders from across the region at the Midwest Ag Export Summit, a premier event focused on tackling the nation's agricultural trade deficit. With the theme "Getting to Surplus: Fixing the Agricultural Trade Deficit," the summit featured insights from legislators, governors, and industry experts. While opinions varied on tariffs and trade strategies, there was broad agreement that the Midwest is well-positioned to lead the conversation, strengthen partnerships, and grow exports. The event offered a unique opportunity to hear directly from high-profile leaders shaping the future of U.S. agriculture and global trade.



South Dakota Soybean Supports Ag Appreciation Day

South Dakota Soybean proudly joined the 41st Annual Ag Appreciation Day at the Sioux Empire Fair, celebrating the people and partnerships that keep agriculture thriving. Thousands of fairgoers enjoyed a pork loin sandwich served by volunteers while sponsors connected with the crowd through interactive booths and giveaways. At the South Dakota Soybean booth, frisbees and pizza cutters drew plenty of smiles—and sparked conversations about how soybeans show up in everyday life, from tires and shoes to turf and more.

Soy Shines at Dakotafest



Dakotafest 2025 brought three days of energy, education, and engagement. Visitors enjoyed mini donuts cooked in soybean oil, a soy-based putting green, and insightful sessions featuring SDSP leaders Tom Kersting and Pat Gathman, along with experts from High Plains Processing and the South Dakota Ag Policy Forum. From conversations at our booth to connecting with ag leaders, it was a memorable event. Thank you to everyone who joined us — we look forward to seeing you next year!

Hot Day, Cool Competition at the Soybean Open

144 golfers teed off at the Brandon Municipal Golf Course for a sold-out Soybean Open that was just as sizzling as the summer heat. Now in its 24th year, the tournament brought together friends, colleagues, and ag supporters for a day of competition, camaraderie, and fun on the greens. None of it would have been possible without the tireless efforts of our volunteers and staff, whose dedication and attention to detail kept the event running smoothly from the first tee to the final putt.





INVESTING CHECKOFF DOLLARS

Soy Industry **NEWS**
(Continued)

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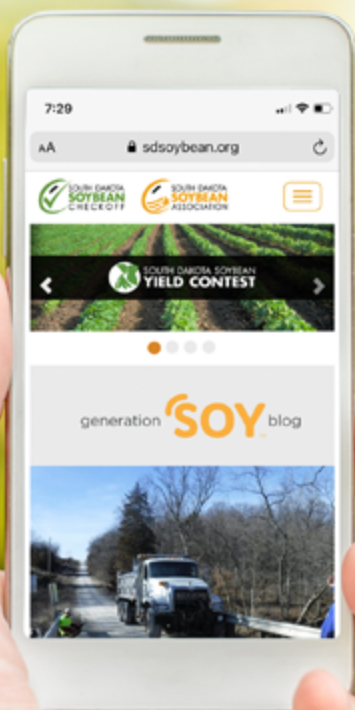
SOY TOPICS

PROGRAMS & EVENTS

NEWS & MEDIA

LEGISLATION

AND MUCH MORE



Summer Shop Talks Bring Insight and Connection to Huron and Faulkton



July 9th & 10th, the SD Soybean Association hit the road for its summer series of Shop Talks, making stops in Huron and Faulkton. Nearly 90 farmers and ag industry professionals joined us for engaging conversations with representatives from our national legislative offices, the Farm Service Agency, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

We were pleased to have Farm Credit Services of America and Legacy Law Firm, P.C., join us as event sponsors, sharing their expertise and support with our attendees.

And, of course, a big thank you to our board members who joined us and helped lead meaningful discussions. Your involvement made these events even more impactful.

STC Keeps Soybeans Moving

The Soy Transportation Coalition met in Virginia Beach to explore how trade policies and infrastructure shape the future of agriculture. From Lock #25 renovations and Mississippi River dredging to rural bridge projects and the new DeLong site in Portsmouth, the discussions and site visits highlighted the critical role of modern transportation in keeping U.S. soybeans moving to global markets.





Mark your calendars!

South Dakota Soybean Association

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FROM INVESTMENT



TO PRODUCTIVITY

The Soy Checkoff invests in research to increase farm productivity, earning a nearly \$6-to-\$1 return¹ on that investment. This translates to increased yields, improved quality, and enhanced global competitiveness.



Learn more at unitedsoybean.org/bettertogether

¹ ROI: Kaiser, H.M. 2024. An Economic Analysis of the United Soybean Board and Qualified State Soybean Boards' Demand- and Supply-Enhancing Programs. Cornell University. © 2025 United Soybean Board



DREAMING, DRIVING, DELIVERING

By Jerry Schmitz, Executive Director of South Dakota Soybean Research and Promotion Council & South Dakota Soybean Association

1982: The Beginning

South Dakota farm families harvested 24 million bushels of soybeans, averaging 29 bushels per acre. That same year, the South Dakota Soybean Association (SDSA) was founded. SDSA leaders met with Governor Bill Janklow to explore how securing rail access to West Coast ports could open Asian markets. Direct, efficient transportation meant faster delivery, opportunity to meet new buyers, and most importantly, better prices for South Dakota farmers.

1984: Investing in the Future

Recognizing the vast potential of economic growth the soybean industry could bring, the South Dakota Legislature passed legislation establishing the Soybean Research and Promotion Council (SDSRPC), the soybean checkoff. SDSRPC, a board of soybean farmers, set its sights on helping farm families by investing checkoff dollars in production and best practices research, and enhancing demand by promoting soybean use domestically and internationally.

1990s: Global Growth and Innovation

In 1990, the U.S. Congress created the national soybean checkoff through the Soybean Promotion and Research Act, forming the United Soybean Board, a farmer-led board with representatives from each state.

- International checkoff efforts resulted in China becoming a major buyer of U.S. and South Dakota soybeans. By 1995, South Dakota production had more than tripled, reaching 75 million bushels.
- SDSRPC hosted international buyers on local farms, showcasing both crop quality and farmer stewardship.
- Checkoff investments sparked innovation. South Dakota farmer-leaders were active participants in the birth of the biodiesel industry and promotion of soy-based inks. SDSA and SDSRPC board members personally introduced soy ink to the *Aberdeen American News* and *Argus Leader* newspapers extolling its environmental benefits, more vibrant colors, and lower rub-off compared to petroleum inks. Today, soy ink remains widely used in newspapers, magazines, packaging, and commercial printing.

2000s: Scaling Up

By 2000, South Dakota soybean farmers were producing over 153 million bushels.

- Checkoff-funded research at SDSU advanced production practices, soil health, livestock rations, and tillage practices.
- SDSRPC leveraged checkoff dollars with other states to expand industrial uses for soy.

- Globally, soybeans became the most traded agricultural commodity, representing nearly 9% of world agricultural trade.
- SDSA championed policy initiatives in trade, biofuels, biotechnology, and sustainability, keeping South Dakota soybean farmers competitive worldwide.



JERRY SCHMITZ
Executive Director of
SDSRPC and SDSA

2010-2025 and Beyond: Delivering Product and Trust Worldwide

In 2024, South Dakota farm families produced 231 million bushels of soybeans, *nearly 10 times more* than in 1982.

- Global markets: 60% of South Dakota soybeans are exported. This August, buyers from Nigeria, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and the United Arab Emirates met with SDSRPC and SDSA board members at a local farm to ask questions and learn the benefits of purchasing South Dakota soybeans.
- Local markets: Livestock within the state consume nearly 20 million bushels annually. Hog producers lead with 9.6 million bushels, followed by dairy at 6.5 million, beef at 1.6 million, and poultry at 1.6 million.
- New uses: Checkoff investments continue to drive innovation in soy-based adhesives, plastics, insulation, lubricants, composites, building materials, solvents, tires, crayons, and high-oleic soybean oil challenging the taste, useability and health benefits of olive oil. Houdek produces a high-protein ingredient made from soy that serves the aquaculture and pet food industries.

DREAMING. DRIVING. DELIVERING.

Helping farm families grow from producing and marketing **24 million bushels in 1982 to 231 million in 2024**, SDSA and SDSRPC have remained steadfast in their mission:

- **DREAMING** of new opportunities for soybeans.
- **DRIVING** demand across domestic and global markets.
- **DELIVERING** results that benefit South Dakota farm families and customers worldwide. Building local economies, trust, and partnerships.

SDSRPC is working to expand use in-state and globally for the benefit of soybean families and their communities. ■



HIGH PLAINS PROCESSING: **A NEW ERA FOR SOUTH DAKOTA SOYBEANS**

A new soybean processing plant is set to open in Mitchell this fall, bringing fresh opportunities for South Dakota farmers and communities alike. High Plains Processing (HPP) is a joint venture led by South Dakota Soybean Processors (SDSP), in collaboration with farmers and industry investors.

The Mitchell facility is designed to meet the rising demand for renewable oil feedstocks that fuel the growing biofuels industry. At the same time, it will supply high-quality protein feed ingredients to both domestic and international markets, strengthening South Dakota's role in the global agricultural economy.

For farmers, the impact is personal. "As a South Dakota farmer, seeing the High Plains Processing Soybean Plant open in Mitchell gives me a lot of pride," says Castlewood farmer Chad Schooley. "It means more value for the soybeans we grow, more opportunities close to home, and a stronger future for our rural communities."

High Plains Processing (HPP) represents a bold new chapter in South Dakota agriculture. The joint venture—led by South Dakota Soybean Processors (SDSP) in collaboration with industry stakeholders and local investors.

The plant is designed to serve two rapidly growing markets: renewable oil feedstocks for the biofuels industry, and high-quality protein ingredients for animal feed, both in the U.S. and abroad.

Leadership and Operations

As the controlling shareholder, South Dakota Soybean Processors, LLC directs the management, marketing, and day-to-day operations of High Plains Processing. Pat Gathman is the General Manager, and all accounting and soybean/ product marketing will be coordinated through SDSP's Volga office.

For more information, call 888-737-7888 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.—a live representative will answer your call.

Soybean Processing Capacity

Operations at HPP are scheduled to begin in mid-October 2025. Once online, the plant will process 35–37 million bushels annually—about 100,000 bushels per day.

With 3 million bushels of storage capacity, space will be tight during the 2025 harvest. Farmers interested in delivering to HPP are encouraged to call ahead to discuss contracting options. Please note: for this harvest season, HPP will not offer a spot or price-later program.

Soybean delivery bids are always available on HPP's website, hpsd.com, or by contacting the HPP team directly.

Transportation & Logistics

Rail: The facility's loop track can hold approximately 350 railcars, ensuring efficient shipment of meal, hulls, oil, and oil products—as well as incoming grain.

Truck Receiving: It will have an unload capacity of 46,000 bushels per hour. To ensure both speed and safety, drivers will remain inside their trucks at the probe, inbound, and outbound scales.

Grain Delivery System:

- Each truck will receive one card reader ID, assigned to the truck owner at its first delivery.
- For trucks hauling for multiple bean owners, drivers will notify clerks through the kiosk speaker at the probe.
- Drivers will check the printed ticket at the outbound scale to confirm that the correct customer receives credit and payment.

Looking Ahead

High Plains Processing is more than a new facility—it's a partnership between farmers, industry leaders, and the future of renewable energy. With its scale, efficiency, and commitment to service, the new soybean plant is poised to strengthen South Dakota's role in meeting global demand for sustainable agricultural products. ■



The High Plains Processing facility prepares for its grand opening in October 2025, bringing expanded soybean processing capacity to South Dakota growers.



Modern rail and truck receiving infrastructure at High Plains Processing will ensure efficient grain movement and reliable delivery to domestic and international markets.

SDSU RESEARCHER SEES POSSIBILITIES IN FEEDING SOYBEANS TO CATTLE

A researcher at South Dakota State University is looking into feeding soybeans to beef cattle. We reported last year about SDSU's Warren Rusche getting encouraging results when feeding soybean meal to feedlot animals. Now, Zach Smith, an animal science associate professor, says the university's latest research goes beyond the feeding of extruded and expelled soybean meal.

"Taking actual whole soybeans and extruding them and feeding those to cattle is an opportunity to feed more home-grown feedstuffs," explained Smith, for an upcoming edition of the Soybean Pod, "and I say this because we feed less of it to get the same crude protein level, and it brings added fat to the diet. So, we can feed more of the corn we grow on the farm. This was the whole idea."

Research supported by the South Dakota Soybean Checkoff shows that cattle perform well on extruded soybeans, but purchasing the soybeans processed at a commercial plant via heat extrusion is not cost-effective. What's next, according to Smith, is to determine whether costs come into line when that processing is done on the farm.

"What we know now is modern cattle, they grow to be a lot bigger, heavier muscled, more marbling, larger cattle when we harvest them at a heavier weight," said Smith. "When we fed soy to these cattle it worked nicely, so the old thought was that was with different types of cattle, so when we were investigating, we saw really nice improvements in growth performance response."

There's no shortage of distillers' dried grains to feed cattle, and there are plenty of pigs and chickens that are conveniently built to digest soybean meal, but as Smith points out, there's more than enough reason to find out whether soybeans as cattle feed make sense.



"Is there opportunity in this, you know, circular agricultural economy to grow farm stuffs on-farm, recycle those nutrients through manure, feed [the resulting crops] to cattle [and] not sell it off the farm? You know, it makes you really resilient," said Smith, adding, "It's a food security deal."

Feeding extruded soybeans to cattle works, Smith told the South Dakota Soybean Network. The next steps in research are to determine the best inclusion rate and how frequently soybeans should be part of the cattle diet.

"So we're going to investigate those opportunities so we can at least see it fill up some diet space because there are benefits to its intact fat, the quality of its protein," he said. "Being heat-treated, it's ruminally unavailable. It's a bypass protein. The extruding processing of soybeans is an exciting research area for us moving forward." ■



SOUTH DAKOTA SOYBEAN CHECKOFF WELCOMES THOMPSON AND STANGE TO THE BOARD



Jeff Thompson

JEFF THOMPSON

Jeff Thompson farms with his wife Karen near Colton, SD. They raise soybeans and corn. Jeff has been farming with his family for over 42 years. He is a graduate of SDSU with a degree in Mechanized Agriculture and was a member of the South Dakota Ag and Rural Leadership Class VII. He was on the South Dakota Soybean Association board for nine years, and was recently elected to serve as the District 3 Checkoff Director.



Carson with his wife, Brooke, and their daughter, Lainey

CARSON STANGE

Carson Stange is a proud farmer from Stratford, South Dakota. Along with his wife Brooke and daughter Lainey, they operate a multi-generational farm rooted in the heart of Brown County. Raising corn, soybeans, wheat, and cattle, Carson has a deep respect for the land and puts soil health at the forefront of the operation. With an associate degree in Agriculture from Lake Area Tech, he integrates technology into his farming practices, ensuring efficiency and sustainability while honoring time-tested methods. He has served on the township board and Agtegra Delegate Council, and is a graduate of the South Dakota Agricultural and Rural Leadership (SDARL) Class XII. He was recently elected to serve as the District 7 Checkoff Director.

SOUTH DAKOTA SOYBEAN RESEARCH AND PROMOTION COUNCIL FORGES NEW INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS



For South Dakota soybean farmers like Dave Iverson, international relationships aren't just good business—they're essential. As Vice Chairman of the South Dakota Soybean Research and Promotion Council, Iverson sees the untapped potential to export South Dakota soybeans to new, emerging markets across the globe.

"In South Dakota, roughly 60% of our soybeans are exported," explains Iverson, who brings nearly five decades of farming experience to his role. "So the soybean farmers in South Dakota are extremely dependent upon having an international market for our soybeans."

South Dakota Soybean is actively pursuing opportunities in emerging regions where protein consumption is growing rapidly. Iverson identifies Southeast Asia as particularly promising, with countries like Vietnam, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand leading the charge.

"In Southeast Asia, there's a lot of expanding markets," says Iverson. "All of those countries are wanting to increase their protein intake into their diet, and soybeans are a great opportunity

to do that and then also in their livestock industry—the soybean meal is a great opportunity for those animals to improve their diet."

The most compelling aspect of South Dakota's trade strategy lies in the personal relationships forged between farmers and international buyers. "A few years back, I was on a trip to Southeast Asia and met with buyers there," Iverson recounts. "Then the following fall, out of the blue, they made a point to come out to see my farm during harvest. They wanted to see soybeans at the source." This spontaneous farm visit exemplifies the deeper relationships South Dakota farmers cultivate with their international customers.

The return on investment speaks for itself. The soybean checkoff delivers \$12.34 for every dollar invested, demonstrating the tangible value of these international relationship-building efforts.

Visit sdsoybean.org to learn more about international trade opportunities and how your checkoff dollars support market development efforts around the globe. ■

FROM INVESTMENT

TO INFRASTRUCTURE



In the last five years, soy checkoff investments have generated a 4.5-to-1 ROI in export market development and an 18% increase in U.S. soybean exports.¹ Investing \$400,000 for infrastructure research, analysis and design at the Port of Gray's Harbor helped to expand the facility and increase capacity for the export of soybean meal.²



Learn more at unitedsoybean.org

¹ROI Study: Kaiser, H.M. 2024. An Economic Analysis of the United Soybean Board and Qualified State Soybean Boards' Demand-and Supply-Enhancing Programs. Cornell University. ²United Soybean Board, 2022. © 2025 United Soybean Board



Touring the Viterra grain receiving facilities.

SOUTH DAKOTA FARMERS STRENGTHEN SOY TIES ON MEXICO SEE FOR YOURSELF TRADE MISSION

Ritz Ag Consulting



Vegetable oil being bottled at the Oleofinos Refinery.



Group picture in front of the Proan hog processing site.



See For Yourself attendees, Mary Plotter and Dusty Schley, look at soybean meal in the storage pits at Proan.

A recent South Dakota farmer delegation, sponsored by the South Dakota Soybean Checkoff, kicked off a multi-day See For Yourself (SFY) trade mission to Mexico, immersing participants in one of America's most vital agricultural markets. The trip highlighted the depth of U.S.-Mexico agricultural ties, underscoring both the economic value and cultural significance of soy across the supply chain.

BUILDING CONNECTIONS ACROSS THE VALUE CHAIN

From July 7–11, 2025, eight South Dakota farmers traveled across central Mexico, joined by Checkoff staff member Johnna Ringkob and director Derrick Scott. Stops ranged from egg and livestock integration facilities to soybean oil refining plants, offering participants an up-close look at how U.S. soy powers multiple industries.

“Our visit to Mexico provided a valuable firsthand look at the full agricultural supply chain, from production to processing, highlighting innovation, efficiency, and cultural insight at every stop,” said Scott, a farmer from Geddes and District 2 Director of the South Dakota Soybean Checkoff.

A CRITICAL TRADE PARTNER

Mexico ranks as the United States' second-largest buyer of soybeans and soybean meal, with 2024 imports totaling \$2.3 billion in soybeans and \$896 million in soybean meal. Maintaining this relationship is vital for South Dakota farmers, whose grain often travels by rail southward to reach these customers.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MISSION

- **Proan:** One of Mexico's largest diversified agribusinesses, Proan manages 45 million laying hens, 100,000 sows, and 10,000 dairy cows. The company consumes 5,500 metric tons of soybean meal weekly, much of it sourced from the United States.
- **Empresa Guadalupe:** With operations in egg production, feed milling, pet food, and soy-based food products, the company purchases 25,000 metric tons of soybean meal monthly, using U.S. soy as a key protein replacement.
- **Bunge (formerly Viterra):** The delegation toured a shuttle unloading facility in Encarnación with storage capacity exceeding 85,000 MT, where 25,000 MT of U.S. soybean meal arrive each month.
- **Oleomex:** A leading edible oil company, Oleomex imports nearly 12.5 million bushels of U.S. soybeans annually to support production for customers such as Frito-Lay.

Additionally, a virtual presentation by the U.S. Soybean Export Council highlighted the Americas region's growth potential, including training programs through Soy Excellence Centers that prepare the next generation of industry leaders.

STRENGTHENING THE GLOBAL MARKETPLACE

For the participating farmers, the trade mission wasn't just about learning statistics—it was about seeing U.S. soy's real-world impact. From bulk oil shipments to protein-rich feed, every stop reinforced the importance of international relationships.

“Connecting South Dakota farmers directly to global partners ensures we remain competitive and responsive,” Scott emphasized. “This mission reaffirmed that Mexico is not just a customer but a partner in growing agriculture for the future.” ■



Dusty Schley visiting with an employee in the feed mill at the Paisa Soy Products Facility.



The group visiting with staff at Oleofinos Refinery before starting the tour.



Corn flakes made by rolling yellow corn. This is a product used in dairies.



Mixed container vessel unloading at Puerto Panul.

SOUTH DAKOTA SOYBEAN LEADERS EXPLORE SALES OPPORTUNITIES IN CHILE

Ritz Ag Consulting

Kevin Deinert, President of the South Dakota Soybean Association, and several farmers representing their state soybean checkoff boards from Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, and South Dakota visited Santiago, Chile, from June 21 to 27, 2025. This trade mission was part of a checkoff-funded project aimed at promoting and marketing U.S. Soy products in the Americas, with a focus on building connections from the Midwest. It was the second trade mission to Chile under this initiative, with the primary goals of learning more about the local market and meeting with customers who use soybean meal. Two years ago, Ag Processing Inc. (AGP) achieved a significant milestone by shipping 150,000 metric tons of soybean meal from its Pacific Northwest export terminal to Chile, marking a meaningful new market entry for U.S. Soy. One of the key objectives of this mission was to visit the customer who purchased that shipment, express appreciation for their business, and reinforce our commitment to supplying them with sustainably grown U.S. soybean meal in the future.

CHILE MARKET SNAPSHOT:

Chile, with a population of 19.8 million—about half of whom live in Santiago—is one of the wealthiest countries in South America. Agriculture accounts for approximately 8.5% of the nation's gross domestic product (GDP), and Chile is the world's second-largest producer of salmon. Each year, it produces

around 0.21 MMT, 750,000 metric tons of poultry, 590,000 metric tons of pork, and 2.65 billion liters of milk. The local livestock industry consumes roughly 1.1 million metric tons (MMT) of soybean meal annually. In 2022, Chile imported \$587 million worth of soybean meal from the U.S., and we hope to see that value continue to grow as U.S. Soy expands its market share. In 2024, the United States' export value to Chile was \$860.06 million, with the majority of it comprising wheat, beef, pork, and poultry products.

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS:

AgroSuper, located in Rancagua, is a leading protein provider specializing in chicken, pork, turkey, and processed products. They are vertically integrated for absolute traceability. They currently have five processing plants: two swine, two poultry, and one turkey. They currently process around 40,000 pigs daily at their two facilities. Their two poultry processing plants can process around 750,000 chickens a day. Their smaller business line, turkey, processes around 16,000 turkeys daily at their one facility. At their two pork processing plants, they produce 61,000 boxes of frozen pork that is exported to China (40%), Japan (20%), and Korea (10%). The remaining market is spread across around 48 countries. They export around 22 million pounds annually. Their aquaculture business is the second-largest salmon producer, mostly farm-raised in southern Chile.

AgroSuper uses around 50,000 MT of soybean meal in its feed for its various business segments.

Puerto Panul, located in San Antonio, is one of the busiest ports on the Pacific Ocean. The port mainly handles corn, wheat, soybeans, and soybean meal. They have a 12-meter draft and can unload 12,000 metric tons of grains and 9,500 metric tons of soybean meal daily. Annually, the port handles 3.3 MMT of commodities imported from the U.S., Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay. They load 400 trucks daily, which serves a 100-mile radius, and AgroSuper receives 60% of the freight from the Port.

Ariztia is located in the town Melipilla is a fully integrated poultry company founded in 1936. They purchase around 18 vessels annually, with primary suppliers of soybean meal from Argentina and Bolivia. They consume 10,000 metric tons (MT) of soybean meal each month while producing 500,000 MT of animal feed annually. They have around 30,000 acres of corn, potatoes, and other vegetables. They have four hatchery farms and three process plants that slaughter 1.7 million chickens a week, or 265,000 MT annually. They currently are the primary supplier of all McDonalds in Chile and exports around 13%. They have a full Environmental Sustainability Goal (ESG) and are very interested in buying U.S. Soy if the price is competitive. They are also very interested in using the U.S. Soybean Assurance Protocol on product labels. They forecast around 3% annual growth within their company.

AquaChile is one of the world's largest salmon farming companies, headquartered in Chile. The company is a leading producer of Atlantic and Pacific salmon, with fully integrated operations spanning from hatcheries to processing facilities. It utilizes both freshwater and saltwater hatcheries across 15 sites in Chile and operates six processing plants. AquaChile produces approximately 280,000 metric tons of salmon annually, exporting 94% of its output to markets in North America, Europe, Asia, and Latin America, while keeping 6% for domestic consumption. Known for its focus on innovation and sustainability, AquaChile prioritizes environmental monitoring, responsible feed use, and robust disease prevention, including vaccinating over 60 million salmon each year. As a key player in Chile's aquaculture industry, it plays a significant role in the country's seafood exports.

TRADE MISSION TAKEAWAYS:

1. There is an opportunity for U.S. Soy to continue to enter the market during times of the year when the spread between the U.S. and Argentina is narrow.
2. Exporters should explore the potential of a combo vessel of wheat (or other commodities) and soybean meal from the PNW and Gulf to create a consistent supply in the market.
3. Continued conversation and sharing data showing the value of feeding U.S. Soy to animals versus other origins. ■



On board of a grain container ship, talking to the captain. Puerto Panul is one of the busiest ports in the Pacific Ocean.



Looking at ground feed for the chickens Ariztia Poultry Company and Feed Mill feeds their chickens.



Standing outside of the Ariztia Feed Mill. This vertically integrated poultry company supplies all chicken to the McDonald's in Chile.

Hungry for Truth



TACO TATER TOT CASSEROLE RECIPE

Yield: 6-8 | Prep Time: 15 minutes | Cook Time: 1 Hour | Total Time: 1 hr 15 min

Tater tot casserole has long been a staple in Midwest kitchens. People know it for its comforting layers of beef, cheese, and crispy tater tots. But why not add a twist? Boost the traditional flavors with bold taco-inspired toppings with our recipe for taco tater tot casserole.

Packed with seasoned ground beef, fresh vegetables, and gooey cheese, this casserole is perfect for family dinners or game-day feasts. Plus, it incorporates ingredients like soy-fed beef and dairy from South Dakota farmers, making it a local favorite.

Just a few miles north of Sioux Falls, Lynn Boadwine's dairy farm has been home to generations of hardworking farmers. With his dedicated team, including herd manager Heidi Zwinger, they make sure their cows get the best care.

One way Heidi and her coworkers take care of the cows is by feeding them a high-quality diet. Dairy cows need a protein-rich diet to produce delicious, nutritious milk. The cows at Boadwine Farm are fed hay and silage grown right on the farm, supplemented with soybean and corn meal from the local grain elevator.

Soybeans are a great source of protein. Dairy cows across South Dakota enjoy eating approximately 18,000 tons of soybean meal annually. They also provide the best feed, such as locally grown soybeans.

These soybeans don't just feed cows; they help produce the delicious dairy products we love, like the cheese in this casserole. Heidi's dedication mirrors that of many Midwest farmers, and nothing caps off a long day better than a warm, hearty meal.

INGREDIENTS

- 2lb ground beef
- 2 packets of taco seasoning
- 2 cans cream of mushroom soup
- 2 cans green beans
- 10 oz mushrooms, chopped
- 1 cup shredded cheese (cheddar or Colby Jack)
- 1 bag frozen tater tots
- Salt & pepper to taste



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Brown beef with taco seasoning over medium heat and drain.
3. In a casserole dish, mix browned beef, cream of mushroom soup, green beans, cheese, and salt & pepper.
4. Layer tater tots evenly over the mixture.
5. Layer additional cheese over mixture.
6. Cover with foil and bake for 45 minutes.
7. Remove foil and bake for another 15 minutes to crisp tots.
8. Serve with your favorite toppings for an extra kick.

OPTIONAL TOPPINGS & VARIATIONS:

Toppings: Customize your casserole with diced tomatoes, sour cream, black olives, jalapeños, or even avocado for a fresh twist.

Variations: Substitute ground turkey or chicken for a leaner option. Add black beans or corn for extra texture and flavor.

The addition of taco flavors makes it exciting, while the ingredients still keep it hearty and comforting.

Soy Use #897

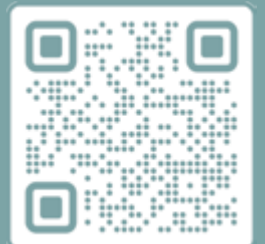
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WHERE FOOD BEGINS: **LANDI SCHWEIGERT'S DAY WITH ANDREW HEINE IN VERMILLION**

By Landi Schweigert

Growing up in Gregory, SD, I've always been surrounded by farming and ranching. I actually grew up on a farm! We owned a lot of cattle, horses, planted alfalfa, and I have many fond memories of riding along with my grandpa in the combine, but to be honest, now that I'm an adult, I didn't realize just how little I actually knew about what really goes on and how much has changed in agriculture over the years.

As I've grown and established a food-based business here in Sioux Falls, I've become increasingly interested in where our food comes from, how it's harvested, what makes a good product, and how I can be more supportive of our agricultural leaders who quite literally put food on our tables.

I had the honor of heading down to Vermillion, SD to meet Andrew Heine of Heine Hybrid Seed Corn. When I heard "hybrid corn," I was immediately intrigued by what this meant. I'd never heard of this before!

Driving down the dirt road to the Heine farm was something straight out of a movie. I thought of my dad and how he always referred to the farm as "God's Country," and in that moment, I knew exactly what it meant.

On one side of the road, there were rolling hills with a clear site of the Vermillion River, and on the other side, beautiful fields that were freshly damp from the rain the night before. I immediately noticed several different homes, large shop buildings, and tons of grain bins that were bigger than anything I'd seen before as we got closer.

When we arrived, Andrew met us at the main shop, and we jumped right into the family history behind the Heine family farm. I learned that while the farm itself has been around for a very long time, the Heine's have only been producing hybrid corn for almost 50 years!

Andrew is a third-generation farmer in his family, and he works alongside his dad, uncle, and cousin—hence the houses I saw driving in. I learned that most of the family, including Andrew, graduated from Vermillion High School and then went on to college at SDSU. There was even an article on the wall about the Heine family and their Jackrabbit roots, which made me giggle since I was very clearly in Coyote Country.

Andrew gave me a tour of his office, where tons of photographs of the farm over the years were hanging on the wall. It was truly amazing to see where it began and how much it has changed through the photographs. Andrew explained that he usually spends several hours a day in the office answering emails, making schedules for everyone (including the hired men who have been around for decades), and planning out routes for the hybrid corn seed.



We moved on to the shop where there were rows and rows of large crate boxes stacked to the ceiling with seed. Andrew showed us how, when they first started, the seed was bagged in a basic design and stacked on pallets, and now it has grown so much in the last few years that they've changed everything from the bag design to extending the shop 3 times because of growth! The shop was HUGE! With over 2000 seed customers, it has to be to hold everything!

After getting a tour of the shop, Andrew walked us over to the giant grain bins I saw when we arrived. I learned that the huge bins were a whole operation. During harvest, the corn is brought to the seed bins, where it goes through a machine that takes the corn and removes roughly 90% of the husk. Then, seasonal workers come and finish sorting and de-husking the corn.

This machine helps keep the corn kernels intact, which actually helps the embryos stay active and ultimately makes a better product for the farmers Andrew and his family sell to!

After seeing the machines, Andrew asked if I wanted to see the best view of the farm—of course I did! We climbed the stairs to the very top of the seed bins, where you could see for miles!

I noticed some different pens that looked like they could be for animals. He told me that they usually have cattle, but it was such a good year for beef prices that they actually sold them all. He also told me that they have hogs as well. We didn't get to see the hogs because most of them are babies, and they are very susceptible to illness if visitors aren't freshly showered and completely clean before going into the barn.

The beautiful view was captivating, and I couldn't wait to see some of the crops up close in person. I hopped in Andrew's truck and we headed out to the fields to check irrigation pivots. The Heine's plant corn and soybeans, so I got to see the beans at our first stop! Andrew showed me how the seeds on soybeans grow differently from most crops, and even cooler ... I learned how to move a pivot!

The pivots on the Heine farm are all electric and run off of the local REA power source. They are actually fully irrigated by a well fed from the river. I learned that sometimes the power to the pivots gets turned off if the power source is low (the houses in town are a priority), and then once people start going to bed around 10-11 p.m., they get the all clear to turn them back on.

Andrew showed me his iPad, where he has satellite access to turn the pivots on right from the screen, so that he doesn't have to go out to the field in the middle of the night.

He showed me where his fields are, and where his father's are, and told me that his dad doesn't trust technology and prefers to go out himself. Admirable in my opinion - I'm a bear if I don't get enough sleep! I asked how they decide between all of them who is in charge of what area task, and he stated: "We all help each other, but we each have our own roles." Most of those roles just happened when someone needed backup.

After checking the pivots, Andrew drove us to a place he said he is very passionate about. We drove through miles of corn fields and stopped at a steep riverbank. He explained to us that last year, during the flooding that happened all over eastern South Dakota, Iowa, and Nebraska, they permanently lost over 30 acres of land.

He told me about having to get up one night and take an entire pivot (which is HUGE) apart with his dad so they wouldn't lose it in the river. He said they were out all night! You could see where the river got so high and changed its course. I asked if he ever thought it would go back to normal, and he said that it wouldn't, so they would need to make some adjustments to some of the land since it's so sandy in certain areas. Losing land to a farmer is like losing your home to a house fire, and seeing it in person reminded me just how important caring for the land is.

Our final stop of the day was just a few miles down the road to one of the corn fields! It was time to learn the art of spraying crops. Before getting in the tractor, Andrew showed me his planter, which was a box planter. Each box alternates male and female corn seed. I learned that the best time for planting is April 15-30th and that when planting corn, the boxes help alternate the sexes of corn. The male corn was significantly shorter than the female, and it is only used for pollinating the female corn.

Hybrid corn farming involves using seeds produced by cross-pollinating two different inbred corn lines, resulting in offspring with improved traits like higher yields and disease resistance compared to open-pollinated seeds. The hybrid seeds are created by carefully controlling pollination in a process that involves removing the female plant's tassels and allowing the male parent to pollinate it, which is what we saw at the seed bins!

I'm a visual learner, so seeing exactly what Andrew explained in person was so helpful in understanding the process of hybrid seeds.

Our very last task of the day - spraying crops! I hopped up into the John Deere with Andrew, and he showed me all of the fancy gadgets that help make the process easier for farmers. We were able to set the lines and the steering so that the tractor stays on course and eliminates any accidental damage to crops by running them over.

Technology is so much more advanced than I remember! We drove so accurately, and as we drove Andrew showed me how the spray was being strategically placed at the base of the crop so that it prevents run off - aka safer methods and safer products for farmers to use!

Don't worry guys, I saved the best for last. He TRUSTED me with the tractor! That's right, your girl drove a tractor. Hand me a Diet Coke and put me in coach... I'm ready for farm life!

In all seriousness, this was such an incredible experience. Andrew is not only a farmer, but he is also a husband to Abby (who happens to be an engineer - also so cool!) and a father of two. His son is newly 3, and they have a 4-month-old baby girl! I'm also a parent of two under the age of 2, so it was fun to bond over that.

I have a deeper respect for both Andrew and his family, and especially his wife, who holds down the home when the inevitable long hours come, not only during harvest but year-round as Andrew travels all over to talk to various farming communities about Heine Hybrid Seed Corn. Abby was also raised on a farm, so she isn't new to this world and how much work goes into day operations!

Thank you, Andrew, for being such a wonderful host and for showing me a small glimpse into your world. It truly was an honor to see the legacy that is being built. ■

WHEN THE FIELDS GET HEAVY: PRACTICAL STEPS FOR COPING WITH FARM STRESS AT HARVEST

By Andrea Bjornestad, Associate Professor and SDSU Extension Mental Health Specialist

Harvest is here, where farm families work together to accomplish numerous tasks. I often hear farmers share what they love most about farming, and aspects of harvest season are described. However, with unpredictable weather and market prices, time can be critical and intense stress can exist. We often hear sayings such as, “Embrace the suck,” or “It’s okay to not be okay.” However, how do we be okay when we do not feel okay?

RECOGNIZE YOUR STRESS SYMPTOMS.

The first step in gauging how you feel is to recognize when you are experiencing stress. Where do you notice your stress in your body? Our stress symptoms can be emotional (moodiness, irritability, anger, loneliness, anxiousness, panic), cognitive (forgetful, constant worrying, pessimism), physical (fatigue, headaches, aches and pains, gastrointestinal), and behavioral (issues with sleep, eating too much or too little, use of alcohol, drugs, or cigarettes, procrastination). Write down your stress symptoms. Do other people notice your stress? Do they notice different stress signs about you?

DETERMINE YOUR CONTROL.

You know you are stressed, and you recognize your stress symptoms. Think about everything that is on your plate – all of your stressors. Maybe your stressors involve finances, strained relationships, weather, market prices, limitations with the pandemic, etc. Which stressors can you control? Which stressors are outside of your control? When we worry about stressors that are outside of our control, our thoughts and feelings spiral downwards where it can be difficult to dig out of negative thought patterns. Try to focus on what you can control.

ADMIT WHEN YOU NEED HELP.

Harvest can feel like a whirlwind with incredible pressure. When you feel like your stressors are extremely overwhelming and your stress symptoms are intense and persistent, it is important to seek support. Support can be from family, friends, neighbors, pastors/spiritual leaders, and counselors.

The Avera Farm and Rural Stress hotline (1-800-691-4336) provides professional assistance that is free, confidential, and available 24/7.

SDSU Extension also offers a behavioral health voucher program for farmers, ranchers, agribusiness professionals, and their immediate family members. The voucher program will include funding for up to five free mental health counseling sessions at Rising Hope Counseling. Farmers/ranchers, their family members, and agribusiness professionals can complete a voucher interest form at <https://extension.sdstate.edu/agriculture-behavioral-health-voucher-program> or call Rising Hope Counseling at 605-494-1500 to schedule an appointment.

FORGIVE YOURSELF.

If you are currently struggling with your thoughts and feelings, you are not alone. It is okay to have days where you feel competent and accomplished, and other days where it might be a struggle to accomplish one task. Forgive yourself for the hard days.

For additional farm stress resources, please visit extension.sdstate.edu/tags/farm-stress. ■



Andrea Bjornestad



INSTITUTE CEO SAYS RESEARCH COUNTERS ANTI-SEED OIL MESSAGING

There is a lot of scientific data supporting the health benefits of soybean oil consumption. While some voices have questioned seed oils, including soybean oil, lately, research from Soy Nutrition Institute (SNI) Global shows those oils are healthy. Many government health authorities from around the world back that, according to Julie Ohmen, the CEO of SNI Global.

“The science is pretty clear and they make clear statements that consuming these types of unsaturated fats as part of a balanced diet promotes better long-term health,” Ohmen told the South Dakota Soybean Network. “Here in the U.S., soybean oil has a qualified health claim, which is backed by the FDA, and it states that ‘eating about 1.5 tablespoons daily of soybean oil may reduce the risk of coronary heart disease.’”

Anti-seed oil sentiment, says Ohmen, is based on information that lacks scientific backing. It dates back to speculation that linoleic acid, the primary fatty acid in seed oils, may contribute to low-grade inflammation.

“Actually, after 17 years, it remains unconfirmed by large, quality, randomized control trials that have been done after that,” she said, “and it continues to be disputed within the mainstream nutrition science community.”

The anti-seed oil movement developed out of a lack of understanding about how seed oils are produced, said Ohmen.

“And what we see is that when people don’t know how something is made, they’re just much more vulnerable to this messaging,” she said.

That is why, Ohmen added, transparency and the public education piece of SNI Global are important.

“Ultimately, what defines the healthfulness of a food is its impact on the health outcome versus how it’s processed, so reducing public health advice to viral soundbites, I think, really risks undermining the trust and legitimate science, which is really what SNI Global stands for,” she said, “And it really can have serious implications.”

Ohmen and two of her colleagues from SNI Global will be featured on upcoming editions of the Soybean Pod, sponsored by South Dakota soybean farmers and the South Dakota Soybean Checkoff. ■



Julie Ohmen





ASA Director Brandon Wipf participated in pie eating contest at the South Dakota State Fair.



The start of the interactive mural.

FAIRGOERS LEARN, RELAX, AND CONNECT THROUGH SOYBEANS AT THE SOUTH DAKOTA STATE FAIR

The South Dakota Soybean Checkoff invited fairgoers to relax and learn during the South Dakota State Fair in Huron. In collaboration with Lawrence & Schiller, South Dakota Soybean Checkoff hosted The Soybean Lounge, a space designed to help people learn about or share their own stories related to soybeans.

Inside the lounge, children of all ages added their creativity to an interactive mural, while families and individuals explored engaging displays packed with fun soybean facts and information. It was both a place to learn and a space to unwind amid the bustle of the fair.

Beyond the lounge, the fair offered plenty of excitement with rides, music, food, and a variety of eating competitions. South Dakota ag leaders also joined in the fun during a lively pie-eating contest, featuring Secretary Hunter Roberts, Roger Chase, and South Dakota Soybean's own Brandon Wipf. After some friendly competition, Roger Chase took the win, while Roberts and Wipf landed in the middle of the pack. To top it off, Roger earned the chance to pie the loser in the face!

Overall, the fair was a fun and engaging way to connect with the public while highlighting the role soybeans play in South Dakota's way of life. ■



Kids use soy-based paint to paint the interactive mural.



The finished mural at the end of the State Fair.



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SOUTH DAKOTA SOY FARMERS WELCOME GLOBAL CUSTOMERS TO STRENGTHEN PROTEIN PARTNERSHIPS

South Dakota soybean farmer and USB director Dawn Scheier recently hosted international guests from Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Nigeria, markets that together represent more than 535 million people and rapidly growing demand for protein.

These countries face significant protein deficiencies, making them priority destinations for U.S. soybeans and soybean meal. With the support of the U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC), U.S. Soy is positioning itself as a reliable partner to help address those needs.

The farm visit gave delegates a firsthand look at how South Dakota farmers are producing soy with a focus on sustainability, quality, and consistency. For buyers and government representatives from emerging markets, connecting directly with farmers helps strengthen trust and understanding, both critical to long-term trade relationships.

“This visit underscores the importance of farmer leadership in global market development,” said Jerry Schmitz, Executive Director of the South Dakota Soybean Checkoff. “By opening our farms, we’re not only showcasing our production, but also demonstrating our commitment to being part of the solution to global protein challenges.”

Checkoff Directors Bruce Haines and Jeff Thompson, along with Association Director Drew Peterson, addressed event participants. Their leadership highlights the collaborative effort between South Dakota farmers and industry partners to ensure U.S. Soy remains the supplier of choice in emerging markets.

As U.S. Soy continues to expand its footprint globally, on-farm experiences like this remain key to bridging the gap between producers and international buyers. For farmers, the message is clear: soy grown in South Dakota doesn’t just fuel local communities, it’s helping nourish the world. ■



Drew Peterson speaks to international buyers at a farm visit near Salem, SD.



The USSEC group posing for a photo while visiting Pat and Dawn Scheier's farm.



South Dakota Soybean Genesis Leaders Program

Class 5 (2025-26) Dynamic Leadership Skill Development

GROWTH... It's what soybean producers are all about. And now is the time to apply that same principle to yourself. The Soybean Genesis Leaders Program is designed to give active members of the soybean industry a deep foundation in leadership skills and industry knowledge, positioning you for growth at your operation and in your career.

The Soybean Checkoff has partnered with South Dakota Agricultural and Rural Leadership, the premier ag leadership development organization in the state, to deliver this program exclusively for soybean growers. SDARL is proud to offer its proven, hands-on, in-depth learning model to maximize your opportunity for growth.

Seminar Details

I. Soybean Industry Overview

December 8, 2025 | Location TBD

II. Innovation and Forward Focus

January 7, 2026 | Location TBD

III. The Legislative Process

February 2-3, 2026 (Overnight) | Pierre, SD

IV. Leadership Readiness

March 9, 2026 | Location TBD

Eligibility

South Dakota residents age 21 and older with direct participation in the soybean industry are invited to apply to the Genesis Program. Applicants are encouraged to attend the Genesis Program with a spouse/partner to maximize learning and growth.

Seminar Format

Each session is a full day of learning, networking, and hands-on experiences. Seminars will take place in locations around eastern South Dakota, with the Pierre seminar including an overnight stay.

Tuition

A class fee of \$200 will apply to each participant. Upon completion of the Genesis Program, the fee will be refunded at the rate of \$50 per seminar attended.

Important Dates

Applications will be accepted through December 5, 2025.

Weather Policy

Safety is the top priority. Should inclement weather occur, class members will be notified by 12:00pm the day prior to the seminar if it has been rescheduled.



READY TO APPLY?

Visit sdsoybean.org
or scan the code!

Presented by





Kevin Deinert, Tanner Hento, Blake Foxley, Brandon Wipf and Mariah Kessler attend ASA meetings in Washington DC.

SOUTH DAKOTA SOYBEAN LEADERS BRING FARMER VOICES TO CAPITOL HILL

By Tanner Hento

Advocacy and promotion of soybeans are always at the forefront of South Dakota Soybean's priority list. July was no exception. A group of three state board members (Kevin Deinert, Tanner Hento, and Blake Foxley), as well as two national board members (Brandon Wipf & Jordan Scott) made their way to Washington D.C. during the week of July 14th to have the voice of South Dakota heard.

First and foremost, seeing the American Soybean Association working for the betterment of soybeans and farmers as one collective unit, is truly remarkable. The staff in D.C. is incredible with their preparation, attention, and education of the group of farmers that heads out to Capitol Hill.

The details of the week: Fresh off of passing the One Big Beautiful Bill, many questions arose and clarity was given for the details of the over 800 pages of text. After years of pressing onward for a new Farm Bill, a portion of our collective needs were met. Increased reference prices, voluntary base acre updating, increased funding for crop insurance, as well as increasing the ability for credit access for young and beginning farmers were all addressed and passed within the bill. However, the job is not done. Still on the table needing addressing is continued and furthering access to CRP acres and funding, as well as funding and promotion of biofuels, which play a critical and imperative role in our soybean demand.

One issue of great concern that all producers should be aware of is the Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) initiative. Embedded within this movement is the concern of seed oils being portrayed as having a negative effect on the health of its consumers. We as an association spent significant time urging the use of sound and objective science-based findings, rather than the subjective and often misconstrued facts that have been attached to seed oils. Along with seed oils, protecting the use of atrazine, glyphosate, as well as



South Dakota ASA and State Directors meeting with US Senator Mike Rounds.

other critical inputs needed for soybean production was a critical point we made sure was heard to the Senators and Representatives from South Dakota.

We were extremely grateful for meeting with both John Thune and Mike Rounds in person. Having our voice heard, both as soybean growers on a national scale, as well as issues specific to South Dakota, is critical for our continual success. Our checkoff dollars and membership contributions to South Dakota Soybean are beyond vital to our success as soybean farmers.

Agriculture continues to shrink with those directly linked to farming. In the 1920s, around 30% of the U.S. was considered part of the farming population. Now it constitutes around 1%. Our voice needs to be heard now more than ever. I assure you, South Dakota Soybean is making sure the 1% is not forgotten. ■



SOYBEAN OIL FUELS BIOFUEL GROWTH: **CLEAN FUELS ALLIANCE DRIVES DEMAND FOR BIOFUELS**

Soybean demand comes from a variety of sources, but aside from livestock feed, biodiesel and other soy bio-based fuels are among the top demand drivers for soybean oil. "Soy-based biofuels collectively are an essential market for soybean growers," says Heather Buechter, director of communications for Clean Fuels Alliance America.

"That is one of the things that we are proud of is that we were founded by soybean farmers to get rid of this excess soybean oil and find new markets for it, provide more value to soybean farmers," said Buechter, referring to the beginnings of the Soybean Checkoff-supported Clean Fuels Alliance America. "Over the years, I feel like we've done a pretty good job of that; we're adding up to 13 percent of value to soybean farmers because of clean fuel production, and demand continues to grow."

That message is being heard. Various facets of the transportation industry are showing interest in switching to cleaner fuels for decarbonization, according to Buechter.

"So the more we educate rail, marine, home heating on-and-off-road transportation, we're just seeing demand increase and providing more return on investment to farmers," she said. "So you know, it's an all-around great story of American ag fueling and feeding our nation."

Among five feedstocks that go into the production of biodiesel, renewable diesel and sustainable aviation fuel, soybean oil is the most frequently used.

"Soybean oil is still our primary feedstock, and we're using every ounce we can get, about a billion pounds every month going into our industry," she explained. "And we're going to continue to work to get even more; we just need more soybean oil to do it. But

we're seeing crush capacity come online as well and increasing, so a lot of opportunities ahead."

There are billions of dollars invested in developing more soybean crush capacity, including a new plant under construction near Mitchell, South Dakota, and every gallon of soybean oil means more soybean meal to feed livestock.

"The more feed that is out there, then that lowers costs, obviously, but also it's helping feed not only Americans, but it's also helping feed countries around the world, so there's more export opportunities available for that meal too," she said. "That's something, I think, gets overlooked, that the population is growing and there's a growing demand for more food, and this is just a really great way to solve that problem." ■





SOUTH DAKOTA FARMERS CONNECT WITH DIVERSE GLOBAL CUSTOMERS AT SOY CONNEXT 2025



South Dakota farmer Mike McCranie had many opportunities to connect with customers, exporters and other members of the global soy value chain at Soy Connex 2025.



Mike McCranie shared the excellent condition of the South Dakota soybean crop as part of the “Fresh from the Field” farmer panel at Soy Connex 2025.

The U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) brings U.S. Soy buyers, sellers, growers, and visionaries together every year for the premier global industry event: Soy Connex.

Against a backdrop of changing trade dynamics and increasing global demand for reliable, high-quality soy protein and oil, the 2025 event gathered more than 700 attendees from 59 countries in Washington, D.C. from August 20 to 22, with invaluable support from a South Dakota Soybean Research and Promotion Council sponsorship.

U.S. Soy is America’s top agricultural export, contributing \$31.2 billion to the U.S. economy in the 2023-24 marketing year and traded in more than 80 countries. Fueled by rising global demand for soybean meal to support the expansion of global livestock, aquaculture and poultry production, USDA projects a 4.3% year-over-year increase in global soybean demand in the 2024-25 market year, reaching 346.2 million metric tons.

“Seven out of every 10 rows of South Dakota soybeans go overseas,” says Mike McCranie, who farms near Claremont, serves as USSEC vice chair, and attended Soy Connex. “Without exports, we don’t have a home for our soybeans. This event gets buyers and sellers together to support exports.”

The Soy Connex agenda featured expert talks, panel discussions focused on sustainability, plant-based protein trends, supply chain insights and global market dynamics. In addition, the Trade Team Invitational connected 315 key buyers and 43 exporter companies to strengthen trade relationships and explore market opportunities.

U.S. Soy customers and exporters value the insights gained during Soy Connex sessions. But opportunities to connect with others in the industry really makes the event shine. Attendees got a real-time crop update from a farmer panel during the program. Plus, the “Ask a Farmer” lounge made it



A Soy Connex attendee learns more about the South Dakota Soybean Research and Promotion Council at a dedicated kiosk in the main meeting room.



Soy Connex 2025 brought together more than 700 attendees from 59 countries involved in the global soy value chain.



South Dakota Soybean Research and Promotion Council sponsorship contributed to the success of Soy Connex 2025 in Washington, D.C.



Soy Connex 2025 attendees heard from industry experts about sustainability, soy trends, supply chain insights and global market dynamics.

easy for customers to meet face-to-face with U.S. Soy farmers.

“I visited with a gentleman from Indonesia that I’ve met before,” says McCranie. “He has been watching the soybean markets, and he is excited that U.S. soybeans are currently priced competitively. I also enjoyed sitting on the farmer panel and telling everyone about the excellent 2025 South Dakota soybean crop.”

In addition to time in Washington, D.C., many international attendees participated in trade team tours before or after the conference. The visits highlighted the U.S. soybean industry’s transparency and readiness to meet global demand, giving international buyers a firsthand look at the sustainable practices, innovation and stewardship that are core to the U.S. Soy value proposition. A trade team with participants from Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka visited a farm, cooperative, and other soy value chain partners in South Dakota.

South Dakota Soybean Research and Promotion Council support is integral to the Soy Connex program and bringing the most important customers to the U.S.

“I’ve learned that the growing crush capacity in South Dakota could increase our exports to 80%,” McCranie says. “Building and maintaining relationships with customers is really important, especially in Southeast Asia, which is a big part of the market for our soybeans and soybean meal.”

South Dakota farmers also will see a return on this investment as USSEC emphasizes the consistency, reliability, quality and sustainability of U.S. Soy. As demand for soy foods and soy products grows in emerging, expanding and established markets, the industry is focused on a strategy that builds on U.S. Soy’s reputation in the global marketplace. ■

CYBERSECURITY PLANNING: SECURING THE FUTURE

By Assistant Professor Ali Mirzakhani Nafchi, Logan Vandermark, Xufei Yang, Sushant Mehan, Alexander "Sandy" Smart, Jameson Brennan, Sarah Sellars



Ali Mirzakhani Nafchi, Assistant Professor & SDSU Extension Precision Agriculture Specialist



Photo courtesy: Lance Cheung, U.S. Department of Agriculture



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With reliance on digital technologies, precision agriculture requires securing data and implementing key strategies to safeguard digital assets and maintain operational integrity and confidentiality. Standardized frameworks offer structured approaches to securing information systems. Some examples of these frameworks are ISO/IEC (International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC)) 27001 and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Cybersecurity Framework in precision agriculture, producers and businesses organizations must also adopt proactive risk management, including regular assessments, multi-layered security, and incident response plans to reduce cyber risks.

TOOLKITS AVAILABLE

Data encryption encodes information, and only with the correct decryption key can it be accessed. It secures data at rest (e.g., on hard drives or databases) and in transit (e.g., via HyperText Transfer Protocol Secure or HTTPS), with end-to-end encryption ensuring only the sender and recipient can read the data. The main goal is to prevent unauthorized access, theft, or tampering. Authentication and access control further protect systems by verifying user identity through methods like passwords, two-factor authentication (2FA), and multi-factor authentication (MFA), which combines something the user knows, has, or is. Challenges include balancing security with usability, scaling systems as organizations grow, and mitigating insider threats. Regular software updates and automated patch management (software tools that find, download, test, and install updates patches for operating systems and applications without manual effort) can enhance performance and maintain robust security.

Unauthorized access to the farm operation data can disrupt the application of inputs, compromising site-specific application. Advanced technologies like GPS, Internet of Things (IoT), and automation introduce new cyber vulnerabilities in precision agriculture. For example, as GPS is used to maintain accurate row spacing and depth consistency, broadcasting false GPS signals (GPS spoofing) that are stronger than the actual GPS signals may mislead the GPS receivers. Unauthorized data manipulation, such as changing irrigation settings, can harm crop quality and increase costs.

SAFEGUARD THE FUTURE

Even secure systems are not immune to disruptions from cyberattacks, natural disasters, or technical failures. To ensure resilience and maintain trust in the face of unforeseen events, precision agriculture needs to extend beyond prevention and embrace disaster recovery planning and strategies that can safeguard operations. To reduce cyber threats and prevent unauthorized access, use the services that implement the following measures:

- Use encrypted GPS, MFA, and secure communication networks;
- Install firewalls/intrusion detection and regularly update software and firmware;
- Train all personnel involved in agricultural operations in potential cyber threats and proper security practices; and
- Create a rapid response plan to restore operations during incidents.

DISASTER RECOVERY PLANNING

(Courtesy: USDA NRCS South Dakota, CC BY-SA 2.0)

Disaster recovery planning helps organizations minimize downtime resulting from cyberattacks, system failures, natural disasters, or human-caused incidents. Common causes of disasters include malware attacks, ransomware, hardware malfunctions, data corruption, weather-related disasters or human error. The consequences can be severe, including economic losses, interruptions, financial and customer trust losses, data breaches, and reputational damage. Effective disaster recovery planning would include alternative workflows, rapid system restoration, regular data backups, and clear recovery strategies to help prevent or mitigate similar outcomes.

KEY STEPS TO IMPLEMENT THE RECOVERY PLAN:

1. Conduct risk assessments to identify risk factors, such as system functions and components that are time-sensitive and could cause severe damage if not quickly restored. It needs to prioritize based on sensitivity and impact according to their recovery priority (e.g., high, medium, low) based on the severity and immediacy of potential impacts.
2. Develop strategies and plans that align with business needs and are economically viable. Based on these strategies, develop clear and detailed plans that include roles and responsibilities, step-by-step recovery procedures, and communication plans. Communication plans include clearly defined communication channels, stakeholder lists, escalation procedures, and external contacts for vendors, partners, or emergency services.
3. Regularly maintain, review, and update the strategies and plans. This includes conducting simulations to validate effectiveness, training personnel, identifying areas for improvement, documenting lessons learned from actual incidents or tests, and integrating this feedback into revised strategies and plans to improve preparedness continually.

SECURITY AWARENESS TRAINING

Phishing, social engineering, and poor configurations can lead to serious risks. Interactive, practical training using real-life examples can keep staff engaged and updated on evolving threats. Commodity groups can develop shared toolkits, offer industry-wide training, and promote best practices. Individual producers should prioritize basic digital hygiene and use trusted resources to learn more about cybersecurity, such as the USDA, Extension services, and peer networks. All stakeholders can strengthen cybersecurity by leveraging public-private partnerships, university programs, and practical education to stay ahead of evolving threats.

Farmers can strengthen cybersecurity by focusing on six key areas:

1. BASIC CYBER HYGIENE PRACTICES:

- Use strong passwords
- Update software
- Secure Wi-Fi (Avoid using public or unsecured Wi-Fi networks for managing farm operations or transmitting sensitive data).

2. USING SERVICES THAT PROVIDE SECURE TECHNOLOGIES:

- Use encrypted communication channels for transmitting sensitive data.
- Use MFA that adds a layer of security beyond just passwords.
- Use secure methods like VPNs (Virtual Private Networks).

3. VALUE SERVICES THAT PROVIDE SYSTEM MONITORING:

- Vulnerability assessments: Conduct regular audits of farm technology systems. This might involve hiring cybersecurity professionals to perform the assessments.
- Set up monitoring tools to detect unusual activities.

4. DATA BACKUP:

- Regularly back up important data, and store backups in a secure location separately.
- Develop and regularly update a disaster recovery plan that includes steps to restore systems and data.

5. COLLABORATION:

- Share insights and consult cybersecurity professionals (including cybersecurity professionals in Universities IT Security Office and private IT firms like that offer managed cybersecurity services).

6. CYBERSECURITY TRAINING:

- Attend workshops and training sessions to stay current.

CONCLUSION

By adopting these practices, farmers and agricultural organizations can create a more resilient digital environment, protecting operations, ensuring productivity, and securing the food supply chain. ■

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THE SOYBEAN POD



with host, Tom Steever



Soil, Soybeans & Stewardship: South Dakota Farmer Kurt Stiefvater's Approach

A Salem, South Dakota farmer was honored by the American Soybean Association for his attention to conservation in his farming operation.

Kurt Stiefvater was one of four regional honorees for The Conservation Legacy Award program and was recognized at the 2025 Commodity Classic in Denver. On this edition of The Soybean Pod, Kurt talks about what his conservation practices are and why he incorporates them into his farming operation. He also reveals what farming methods are the least stressful.

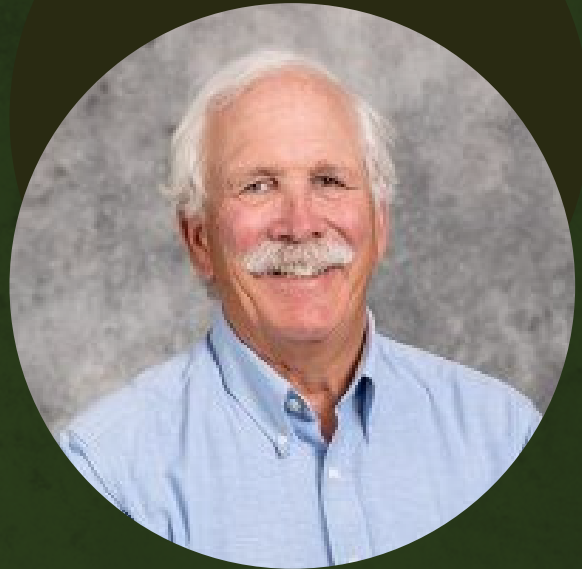


Don Norton on AgUnited for SD

It's sometimes difficult to get groups to agree, but AgUnited for South Dakota has successfully brought several commodity and farm advocacy organizations together in agreement. Don Norton, a former CEO of South Dakota Agriculture and Rural Leadership, is Ag United's executive director. On this edition of The Soybean Pod, Norton explains how an organization becomes more than the sum of its parts by speaking with a unified voice on those issues where the groups – seven of them – share common ground.

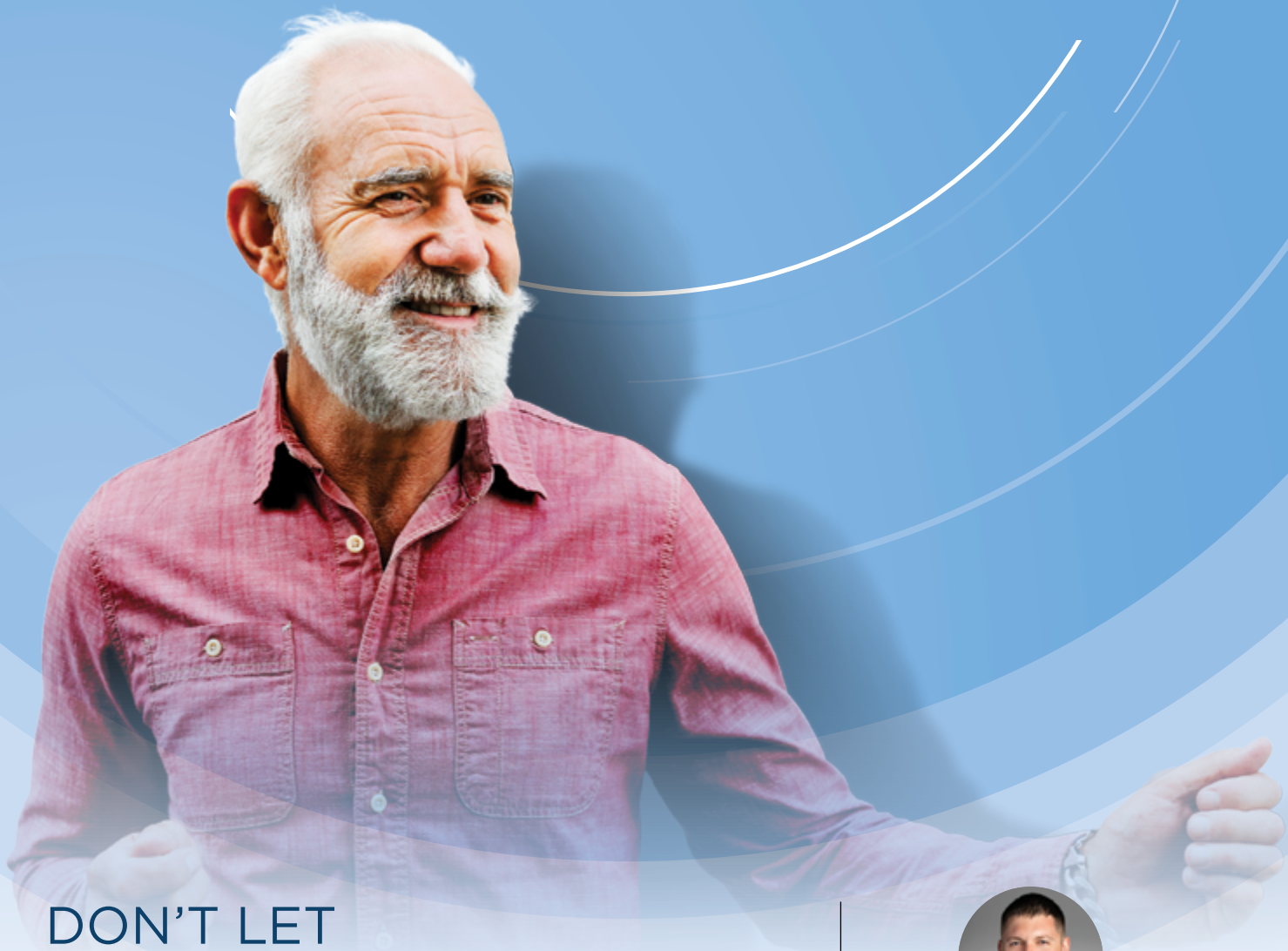
No-Till, Big Gains: Dr. Clay Explains the Soil Science

A South Dakota State University study indicates the adoption of conservation practices like reduced or no-tillage contributes to yield increases and improvements in soil health. In this edition of The Soybean Pod from South Dakota soybean farmers and their checkoff, Dr. David Clay, Distinguished Professor of soil science at SDSU, explains how that has happened and how conservation farming can improve productivity.



Ben Brown on Soybean Markets

The soybean market is hurting compared to its high-water mark. The robust markets soybean growers enjoyed in 2012 and 2022 seem a distant memory. In this edition of The Soybean Pod from South Dakota soybean growers and their checkoff, agriculture economist Ben Brown at the Food and Agricultural Policy Institute offers insights into why the markets are soft, as well as where they might go and how to navigate them.



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